defined in the mores. This was a convenient and rational proceeding, of primitive simplicity and adaptation to the purpose. In Scandinavia and Iceland the ancient laws contained exact prescriptions as to the person who might officiate as the conductor of this ceremony. Relatives of the bride, first on her father's side, then on her mother's, were named in a series according to rank.[1] Such a prolocutor is taken for understood in the *Constitutio de Nuptiis* (England).[2] To him the man promises to take the woman to wife " by the law of God and the customs of the world, and that he will keep her as a man ought to keep his wife." Evidently these statements convey no idea of wedlock unless the mores of the time and place are known/ They alone could show how a man " ought to keep his wife." The man also promises to show due provision of means of support, and his friends become his sureties. Through the Middle Ages great weight was given to the provision for the woman throughout her life, especially in case of widowhood. In fact, a "wife" differed from a mistress by virtue of this provision for her life. In the *Constitutio de Nuptiis* it is added, " Let a priest be present at the nuptials, who is to unite them of right, with the blessing of God, in full plenitude of felicity."

429. Marriage at the church door. In a French ritual of 700 A.D. the priest goes to the church door and asks the young pair (who appear to be walking and wooing in the street) whether they want to be duly married. The proceedings all concern the marriage gifts, after which there is a benediction at the church door, and then the pair go into the church to the mass. A hundred years later the priest asked for the *consensus,* and statement

of the gift from the groom to the bride, and for a gift for the
poor. Then the woman was given *by her father* or friends.[3]

430. Marriage in Germany in the early Middle Ages. In the
Frank, Suabian, Westphalian, and Bavarian laws "the woman was
entitled to her dower when she had put-her foot in the bed/'
The German saying was, "When the coverlet is drawn over

[1] Lehmann, *Verlobung und Hochzeit nach den nordgermanischen Rechten des frukeren M, A.,* 31.

[2] Wilkins, *Concilia,,* I, 216 (644 A.D.). * Friedberg, 61.